



OREGON OFFICE OF EMERGENCY MANAGEMENT

Oregon Office of Emergency Management Media Monitoring Report February 3-5, 2021

NOTE: This media report captures and provides a snapshot of news coverage related to emergency preparedness, disaster response and recovery. The purpose of this report is to provide a consistent overview of coverage within the scope of emergency management in Oregon.

News Media Summary

[Wildfire recovery](#) news increases as the [City of Gates receives relief](#) and questions are raised about [donation funds](#). Meanwhile, homeowners [struggle with insurance claims](#) and [students struggle to adjust](#). [Housing options](#) are a hot topic across the state from [north](#) to [south](#) and [everywhere in between](#). February 6th marks the one-year [anniversary of the Umatilla floods](#). [Outdoor recreation](#) is [on the rise](#), which brings [an increase](#) in search and [rescue missions](#).

National News

- [Los Angeles Times, Feb. 1 - Wildfire smoke may carry 'mind-bending' amounts of fungi and bacteria, scientists say](#) ... Those dark, billowing plumes of smoke that rise on waves of heat during the day and sink into valleys as the night air cools may be transporting countless living microbes that can seep into our lungs or cling to our skin and clothing, according to research published recently in Science. In some cases, researchers fear that airborne pathogens could sicken firefighters or downwind residents. (See also: [The Seattle Times](#), [The Daily World](#), [The Spokesman-Review](#), [Phys.org](#))

Food & Water

- [KEZI, Feb. 2 - State helping wildfire victims test well water](#) If you have a well and your property was damaged or affected by the 2020 wildfires, you can get help paying for testing to make sure your water is safe and free from contaminants. The Oregon Health Authority received funding to support domestic well testing for drinking water for about 2,000 households. (See also: [Albany Democrat-Herald](#), [Estacada News](#), [The Register Guard](#), [Water Quality Products Magazine](#))

Health & Social Services

- [The Bulletin, Feb. 3 - Guest Column: Oregon's "progress" on foster care may be misleading](#) This assertion misses a fundamental point made with compelling evidence by the Centers for Disease Control and Prevention, the National Institute for Health, and the American Pediatric Society: The pandemic itself is the cause of the reduction in numbers of children entering foster care – and this is due to the simple fact that children and families are more isolated than ever before, making child abuse and neglect harder to detect and prevent.

Housing & Shelter

- [KLCC, Feb. 2 - Priority Given To Local Wildfire Victims On New Housing Waitlist](#) McKenzie River Corridor residents displaced by last year's Holiday Farm Fire have some new housing options available starting today. ... Matt McRae, Lane County's long-term recovery manager for the Holiday

Farm Fire, says there's 65 units available at the Hayden Bridge Landing in Springfield, and Sarang in Eugene.

- [OPB, Feb. 3 - FEMA offers temporary housing to wildfire survivors who lost homes](#) People displaced by the Santiam Fire in and around Mill City, Oregon, are moving into manufactured homes provided by the Federal Emergency Management Agency (FEMA). Also known as FEMA trailers, these homes are available to people who are not able to find other temporary housing options and have been living in motels or doubled up with friends and family for the past five months.
- [Portland Tribune, Feb. 3 - Project Turnkey: 'We've already got two strikes against us'](#) Clackamas County is going back to the drawing board on its effort to purchase a motel with the intent of turning it into a transitional shelter for wildfire victims and previously homeless people.
- [KTVZ, Feb. 4 - \\$4.2 million grant to convert Ashland hotel into shelter for those hit by COVID, fires](#) The Oregon Community Foundation announced Thursday that Options for Helping Residents of Ashland has been selected to receive the first Project Turnkey grant of \$4.2 million in state funds to purchase and transform an Ashland motel into the new OHRA Center – a resource center and facility to safely shelter community members negatively impacted by wildfires and COVID-19 pandemic. (See also: [KDRV](#))
- [OPB, Feb. 4 - Bend approves purchase of motel for transitional housing](#) The Old Mill & Suites would need repairs (and funding for those repairs) but could provide 64 units of housing for people experiencing homelessness or at risk of homelessness.

Infrastructure Systems

- [KGW, Feb. 3 - Communities in McKenzie River Valley grateful for efforts to restore internet after devastating fire](#) The Oregon Internet Response group jumped into action to help people in the McKenzie River Valley connect to internet after fire tore through their communities.

Wildfire Recovery & Rebuilding

- [KGW, Feb. 1 - Wildfire-ravaged community of Gates receives some relief from Marion County](#) Gates Mayor Ron Carmickle says a \$50,000 check from Marion County will help put the city in a better position to recover and rebuild. It's been almost five months since wildfires devastated communities in the Santiam Canyon. Finally, a city on the verge of collapse got some relief.
- [KPTV, Feb. 2 - Oregon wildfire victims face insurance issues](#) An Oregon family says they were left hanging by their insurance company after the devastating wildfires last fall. ... FOX 12 reached out to FEMA Tuesday and have not heard back yet. A spokesman with the Oregon Division of Financial Regulation tells FOX 12 that people should expect things to take longer than normal because so many people were impacted. However, there are cases like this that may need some special attention.
- [OPB, Feb. 2 - Santiam Canyon students still recovering from wildfire devastation](#) It's been five months since the Labor Day fires ripped through Oregon's Santiam Canyon and residents are still in recovery mode. Angela Rasmussen is the principal of Santiam Junior/Senior High School. After the devastating fires, she set up a fund to raise money for students who lost so much. While most of their basic food and shelter needs are met, many lost personal possessions and a sense of safety.
- [KLCC, Feb. 3 - Lane County Official: Recovery From Holiday Farm Fire Will Be 'Long Road Ahead' For Locals](#) It's been almost five months now since the Holiday Farm Fire blazed through the McKenzie River Corridor. It destroyed hundreds of homes and businesses in communities like Blue River and Vida. KLCC talked to Lane County's long-term recovery manager for the incident, Matt McRae, on the current state of the fire-ravaged area.

- [Statesman Journal, Feb. 3 - \\$4M was raised for Santiam Canyon wildfire survivors. Why hasn't it been handed out?](#) In the five months since the Labor Day wildfires, groups have collected more than \$4 million to assist survivors in the Santiam Canyon. They've dispersed just over \$260,000. Why haven't they paid out more to families? It's complicated, the individuals behind the fundraising efforts say.

Climate, Weather & Environment

- [KPAX, Feb. 1 - Researchers say wildfire smoke is reversing years of air pollution progress](#) Record-setting wildfires are becoming a regular occurrence in the Western United States. It's a sobering trend that poses a threat to people across the country, as hazardous smoke pollutes the air.

Firefighting & Prevention

- [KATU, Feb. 2 - Clackamas Community College to offer wildland firefighter training](#) Clackamas Community College says it is joining Clackamas Workforce Partnership and Clackamas Fire District 1 to offer training to become a wildland firefighter. Officials say the program offers paid forestry technician and repair specialist training and full-time, seasonal employment.

Hazard Tree, Ash & Debris Cleanup

- [KDRV, Feb. 3 - Almeda Fire clean up enters second phase](#) Bear Creek Estates Mobile Home is the first park to receive ash debris removal. Eight crews are working on the mobile home estate, in Tier One, debris removal is its main priority. John Vial, Director of Jackson county Emergency Operations says that it started slow, but progress is moving along rapidly.

Hazards, Preparedness & Risk Mitigation

- [Hermiston Herald, Feb. 3 - Editor's desk: Rationing supplies during a disaster leaves no good choices](#) This coming weekend, on Feb. 6, is the one-year anniversary of Umatilla County's worst flood in living memory. ... When I've written stories about disaster preparedness, one thing people who work in emergency management always tell me is that in the event of a disaster, you can't count on the government to save you.

Legislative

- [OPB, Feb. 3 - Gov. Kate Brown's proposal to axe Oregon hazard mapping agency unlikely to fly](#) A state agency that plays a key role in preparing Oregon for hazards like earthquakes and landslides is not likely to be disbanded in 2022, as initially proposed by Gov. Kate Brown. Since Brown unveiled that suggestion in a budget proposal unveiled in early December, a groundswell of support has emerged for the Department of Geology and Mineral and Industries, or DOGAMI.
- [Statesman Journal, Feb. 4 - Gov. Brown wildfire bill: power line limits, more fuel treatments and new money for firefighting](#) Gov. Kate Brown introduced wide-ranging legislation last month aimed at combating the rise of destructive wildfires in Oregon. Senate Bill 287 requires utilities to create wildfire safety plans, prioritizes managing forest fuels, bolsters the state's firefighting resources and seeks to safeguard communities against future fires.

Natural Resources, Agriculture & Animals

- [The Bulletin, Feb. 2 - Guest column: Migrant farm workers and environmental racism in Oregon](#) As climate change increases Oregon's temperature, low-income Black, Indigenous and people of color communities will be disproportionately burdened by the dangerous impacts of heat waves,

drought and wildfires. Although urban and rural communities alike will suffer from the consequences of these phenomena, their experiences will be unique.

- [Statesman Journal, Feb. 3 - Explore Oregon Podcast: The day Silver Falls State Park almost burned in the Labor Day fires](#) In this week's edition of the Explore Oregon Podcast, Zach and David talk to Silver Falls State Park ranger Chris Gilliland about the night wildfires came terrifyingly close to burning Oregon's iconic state park.
- [OPB, Feb. 4 - Oregon conservation groups call for protection from post-fire logging](#) A coalition of environmental groups sent a letter to Oregon's congressional delegation this week urging them to stop proposed post-fire logging on federal lands that burned during the 2020 wildfire season.
- [The Oregonian, Feb. 4 - National parks post record highs, lows in visitors during hectic 2020 in Pacific Northwest](#) To say it's been a hectic year for Northwest national parks is an understatement. National park sites across the region posted record high numbers of visitors in 2020, as well as record lows, as park managers dealt with the coronavirus pandemic, raging wildfires and swarming crowds of people, some of whom endangered their own safety and the natural landscapes themselves.

Search & Rescue

- [Wallowa County Chieftain, Feb. 3 - Search and rescue seeks new members](#) Wallowa County Search and Rescue teams were busy in 2020 and are recruiting new members, according to a press release. Despite the COVID-19 pandemic, more people than usual came to Wallowa County to enjoy healthy outdoor activities. As a result, calls were more numerous and more intense.
- [KXL Radio, Feb. 4 - Couple Missing On Camping Trip](#) Matisse Nash and her boyfriend Henry have gone missing. They went overnight camping in the McCredie Hot Springs & Salt Creek Summit snow park area about 15 miles from Oakridge, Oregon. The campground the couple planned to stay at was closed.
- [KRCR TV, Feb. 4 - Deadly avalanche prompts recovery mission in Siskiyou County](#) A deadly avalanche prompted a recovery mission in the mountains of western Siskiyou County Thursday morning. Two backcountry skiers from Ashland were caught in the avalanche around 2 p.m. Wednesday near Etna Summit, according to the Siskiyou County Sheriff's Office.

Volunteers, Nonprofits & Donations

- [KYKN Radio, Feb. 1 - Salem Fire Foundation to Raise Funds Through Online Auction](#) Firefighters have had quite the year with deadly fires, smoke, and the pandemic creating one of the most challenging years ever. The Salem Fire Foundation's goal is to support the Salem Fire Department and help the city have the highest cardiac save rate in the nation. This year, they're holding an online auction to raise funds to support this mission.
- [Ashland Tidings, Feb. 3 - Talent photographer donates art to Alameda fire survivors](#) When some of the hundreds of families who lost their homes and belongings in the Alameda fire began to find housing, Talent resident and photographer Matt Witt decided to offer free art for their walls to help lift their spirits.

Other News

- [Bend Source Weekly, Feb. 3 - To Avoid Fires, Sisters Folk Festival Moves To October](#) This week, Sisters Folk Festival announced that the festival will move the date of the popular fall gathering into October, in hopes of avoiding wildfire/smoke season.